Amendments in Water (Prevention and Control of Pollution) Cess Act, 1977

3580. SHRI ANIL SHARMA: Will the Minister of ENVIRONMENT AND FORESTS be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government have received any communication containing proposed amendments to Water (Prevention and Control of Pollution) Cess Act, 1977;

(b) if so, the details thereof; and

(c) the action Government have taken or proposed to take in this matter?

THE MINISTER OF ENVIRONMENT AND FORESTS (SHRI T.R. BAALU): (a) to (c) The Government has introduced the Water (Prevention and Control of Pollution) Cess (Amendment) Bill, 2000 in the Lok Sabha to enhance the cess rates specified under the Water (Prevention and Control of Pollution) Cess Act, 1977. The said Bill has been referred to the Department-related Parliamentary Standing Committee on Science & Technology, Environment & Forests for review. The Committee has sought certain information, which has been duly furnished.

Unauthorised Cultivation by Tribal People

3581. SHRI H.K. JAVARE GOWDA: Will the Minister of ENVIRONMENT AND FORESTS be pleased to state.

(a) whether it is a fact that many Tribes/Backward Classes and poor people had been cultivating unauthorised on the forest and peripheral land for their livelihood in Karnataka since long;

(b) whether it is also a fact due to ignorance and uneducation they could not avail of the opportunity given up to 1980 for regularisation of snow lands; and

(c) whether the Karnataka Government had written thrice in 1997 and recently to the Centre seeking approval for regularisation of cultivated land if so, what action Government propose to take?

THE MINISTER OF ENVIRONMENT AND FORESTS (SHRI T.R. BAALU): (a) to (c) As per the various Rules and Guidelines to the Forest (Conservation) Act, 1980 only such cases of forest encroachments are eligible for regularisation, where the State Governments had already taken a decision prior to the enactment of the Act to regularise the encroachments, based on certain eligibility criteria fixed at that point of time, but could not implement

their decision either wholly or partially before the enactment of the Forest (Conservation) Act.

The Government of Karnataka has submitted one proposal in 1992 and two proposals in 1995 for regularisation of Encroachments on forest land and their status is as below:—

S.No.	District	Area (Ha.)	Status
1.	Bijapur	46.80	Rejected as these were post 1980 encroachments.
2.	4 different districts	732.24	Rejected on merit.
3.	19 different districts	17007.2	Approved for diversion of 14,848.83 ha.

No new proposal for regularisation of forest encroachments has been received from Government of Karnataka in 1997 or thereafter.

Forest Dependent Communities in H.P.

3582. SHRI ANIL SHARMA: Will the Minister of ENVIRONMENT AND FORESTS be pleased to state:

(a) The total number of Forest Dependent Communities in Himachal Pradesh; and

(b) how much forest land is utilised by the said population and whether there is any scheme to rehabilitate them in order to the forest land from degradation?

THE MINISTER OF ENVIRONMENT AND FORESTS (SHRI T.R. BAALU): (a) and (b) No survey has been done to assess number of forest dependent communities in Himachal Pradesh but it is estimated that about 90% of rural population is heavily dependent on forests for exercise of usufructs right to timber, water, grazing etc. There is no scheme to rehabilitate them as the local population has specified rights in the designated forests.

Conservation of Forests and Wild Life in Maharashtra

3583. SHRI SURYABHAN PATIL VAHADANE: Will the Minister of ENVIRONMENT AND FORESTS be pleased to state:

(a) what are the schemes taken up by Government in Maharashtra State for conservation of forests. wild life and environment in the State during the last three years; and